

STRATEGIC INTELLIGENCE BRIEF

SECURITY THREATS TO CANADA'S 44th ELECTIONS – UPDATE #4

This assessment is intended to provide situational awareness of domestic security-related threats to Canada's 44th general elections. The information in this assessment is based on reporting from the RCMP Combined Intelligence Group, law enforcement partners, searches against RCMP holdings, and open source resources (current as of September 14, 2021, 1300hrs). The IMCIT continues to maintain visibility on emerging threats and will provide updates as required basis.

KEY POINTS

- Threats specifically directed towards the Prime Minister (PM) continue.
- IMCIT has noted an increase in the number and impact of public order events, whether directed towards Protected Persons or at locations such as hospitals.
- IMCIT assesses that anti-vaccination sentiment remains the focus at the majority of protests that have been aimed at Liberal Party of Canada (LPC) campaign events. As of this writing, the majority of anti-vaccine discussion is promoting upcoming rallies occurring in Canadian cities for the remainder of September. It is likely that ideologically motivated individuals who have attended Liberal campaign events will be in attendance at these rallies.
- Individuals refusing to wear masks have attended advance polling stations and, in some cases, yelled at staff on site. However, no physical violence has been reported.

PURPOSE

To provide an overview of the current domestic threat environment related to Canada's 44th general elections, as of 14 September 2021.

ASSESSMENT

The past week has shown a marked increase in the number and size of protests as well as in chatter and rhetoric that has been advocating for divisive action or violence. Over the past few days, a number of incidents have occurred which are being tracked or investigated by the RCMP and applicable law enforcement partners.

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Federal Policing National Intelligence – Ideologically Motivated Criminal Intelligence Team (IMCIT)

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- On 10 September 2021, a Subject of Interest (SOI), who had been previously charged for making threats¹, allegedly issued a threat on Instagram targeting Parliament. The SOI was arrested and charged for uttering threats and breaching their current conditions.²
- On 13 September, 2021, an Elections Canada (EC) worker assisted an individual over the phone with an address update. In response to the EC worker's offer for additional assistance, the caller replied with an indirect threat towards the PM, asking the EC worker for help.³ The RCMP is investigating.
- The same day, during a Burnaby, BC campaign event, the PM was heckled by a protester to the point where, due to the disruptive nature of the protester, the PM interview originally scheduled to take place outdoors was moved inside.^{4 5}
- Although not election-related, a YouTube channel that recently posted a video by a self-described militia group, uploaded a second video on 14 September, 2021 (see FPNI IMCIT TA 03, dated 2021-09-13, for more information on the group). The two-minute long video depicted a lone individual who reiterated his desire for societal change, describing himself as a Sovereign Citizen. The RCMP continues to engage with applicable security and law enforcement partners and investigate the associated content for indications of criminality.⁶
- Select comments on 4chan, a platform known for violent rhetoric, continue to advocate for the death of the PM if the LPC wins the election. Investigators continue to face difficulty with substantiating threats on 4chan due to the anonymous nature of the platform.

As of this writing, the majority of anti-vaccine discussion on social media is promoting upcoming rallies occurring in various Canadian cities for the remainder of September. A "World Wide Rally For Freedom", scheduled to take place on 18 September, 2021 is currently the most widely discussed.⁷ This chatter is occurring on the same social media that is typically used to promote protests against LPC campaign stops (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, s.37 etc.). Media coverage discussing recent charges against individuals protesting at Liberal campaign events in Kitchener⁸ and London⁹ has not quelled discussion related to protesting future PM campaign stops. It is highly likely that future disruptions of LPC campaign events will continue to be the focus of social media dedicated to anti-vaccine rhetoric.

The IMCIT assesses that it is very likely there is crossover in attendance at recent protests aimed at hospitals, consisting of individuals who have also attended and continue to promote anti-Liberal protest events. Information from law enforcement partners indicates that there has been an increase in the number and impact of public order events, whether directed towards Protected Persons or critical infrastructure locations such as hospitals. No major incidents of violence were reported in relation to the anti-vaccine protests that took place on 13 September, 2021 outside several hospitals throughout Canada, although events in Ottawa, Edmonton, Toronto, and Calgary were met with small numbers of counter-demonstrators.

It is important to note that two Ontario-based individuals associated with organizing the Canada-wide protests outside hospitals were present in Washington, DC at a protest organized by a group called

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Global Frontline Nurses¹⁰, which occurred on the same day as the January 6th Capitol Hill incident.¹¹ These individuals have been present at various protests throughout Ontario since 2020 concerning lockdowns, masks, and mandated vaccinations which have tolerated the presence of ideologically motivated individuals who have promoted conspiracy theories. They were fired from their jobs as a nurses in January 2021.¹² Although they do not overtly promote QAnon conspiracy theories, the individuals' presence in Washington on January 6th, along with their discussions about corruption in hospitals¹³ and promotion of content highlighting skepticism of the vaccine,¹⁴ have fed into narratives popular with QAnon conspiracies.

While the majority of protests related to the election thus far have been aimed at campaign events, information from law enforcement partners indicates that individuals refusing to wear masks have attended advance polling stations and, in some cases, yelled at staff on site. However, no instances of physical violence have been reported to the RCMP to date. Media reporting indicated that EC workers in the riding of Dartmouth-Cole Harbour were harassed and threatened by some electors due to the absence of a preferred candidate from the ballot (the former candidate withdrew and was not replaced by the party). EC personnel noted that the local Police of Jurisdiction were called at two separate locations due to instances of voters verbally abusing EC staff¹⁵.

The RCMP and applicable PoJ continue to investigate all such instances of threats and intimidation.

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Issued by: Ideologically Motivated Criminal Intelligence Team (IMCIT)

Approved by: Director, Directorate of Strategic Intelligence, Federal Policing National Intelligence

¹ RCMP Holdings

² RCMP Holdings

³ RCMP Holdings

⁴ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/trudeau-lashes-out-protester-derogatory-remark-wife-1.6174623>

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ RCMP Holdings

⁷ <https://worldwidedemonstration.com>

⁸ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/kitchener-waterloo/kitchener-man-charged-over-trudeau-threat-1.6171716>

Personal Info. [REDACTED]

¹⁰ <https://www.instagram.com/p/CJrL9LpnnIk/>

¹¹ <https://nationalpost.com/news/canada/nurses-who-attended-anti-covid-measure-rally-in-d-c-in-january-helping-organize-cross-country-events-in-canada>

¹² <https://nationalpost.com/news/canada/nurses-who-attended-anti-covid-measure-rally-in-d-c-in-january-helping-organize-cross-country-events-in-canada>

¹³ <https://www.vice.com/en/article/bvxy9q/covid-conspiracy-nurses-among-those-who-spoke-at-trumps-violent-dc-rally>

¹⁴ <https://www.vice.com/en/article/bvxy9q/covid-conspiracy-nurses-among-those-who-spoke-at-trumps-violent-dc-rally>

¹⁵ <https://globalnews.ca/news/8188856/dartmouth-cole-harbour-election-workers-harassed/>